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ISAAC PENINGTON.

BY THE EDITOR.

DURING the second week of the eighth month, 1679, a procession of several hundreds of mourners followed a bier, with no ostentatious pomp, nor merely pretended sorrow, to the burying place of Friends belonging to Chalfont meeting, in Buckinghamshire. The body they bore was that of Isaac Penington, their venerated neighbor, counsellor and friend, the father-in-law of William Penn,—dust that would have honored Bunhill Fields, or sanctified Westminster Abbey. Every tongue in that great multitude might have said honestly, with good Thomas Ellwood, "Love him I did, and that entirely, and sure I am very deservedly; for he was worthy indeed of love from all men, but more especially from me, to whom he had been abundantly kind." Some account of this man may not be wholly without interest, as regards his own remarkable character, his religious Brotherhood, and the times when he lived.

Sixty-three years before the date we have mentioned, Penington had been born,—born of flesh and blood, and to comfortable estates; and more than twenty years before, he had been born again, not of flesh and blood but of the Spirit, and numbered among "God's people." Of honorable descent, he added, by his own character and talents, to the dignity of his family. Enjoying the education of a gentleman of quality, he consecrated the learning of schools and universities to the cause of his divine Master. Admitted, by

the rights of his parentage and condition, to familiar converse with the best men of his time, a time not sparing of erudition and accomplishments, he pledged his penetrating intellect, his brilliant wit, his pliable and active invention, in a fidelity at once loyal and devout, to the service of the Kingdom of Heaven. Endowed with ample fortunes, he distributed them, for the relief of human misery, with a bounty that humbly and reverently imitated that impartial Providence which sends rain on the just and the unjust.

Had Isaac been ambitious of promotion, his father's connection with public affairs and his own abilities would have opened to him a straight path to civil distinction. But his sensitive conscience warned him away from the corrupt politics of a dissolute Court, and the unscrupulous strifes of stormy revolutions; his temperament and tastes inclined him rather to scriptural studies and religious contemplations. "With meek, blessed Moses, he refused the Egyptian glory of the world, and chose rather a life dedicated to an enquiry after God, and holy fellowship with him and his despised Israel."

The fervor of his piety and the severity of his morals began to appear in his childhood. The ordinary pastimes and pleasures of youth had fewer attractions to him than the inward exercises of religion. He turned away from the noisy sports of his companions to the solitudes of prayer. No pageant and no prize wrought so commanding an influence on his desires as the secret visitings of God's Spirit. If he could feel that the Lord Almighty was near him, and stirring holy affections within his heart, it was more than a compensation for the loss of worldly favor, or the frowns of trifling associates. It does not appear that in itself his youthful piety was of a morose or gloomy cast; the presence of the Most High was a cheerful presence to him; the God he breathed his childish petitions to, was a Father; he communed with Christ confidently; the mystic communications from above came down upon him in the glory of light, — the inner "light that lightens every man that cometh into the world"; it was a Heavenly Dove that brooded gently and tenderly over his opening affections, and kindled his soaring aspirations. And yet it is not strange that to the youths

about him destitute of his sensibilities, and unvisited by his soaring hopes, his deportment appeared ascetic. His afflictions were for their thoughtlessness. Their levity was his heaviness. Why should he vex himself, and solicit the skies for their harmless frivolity? Penn says, "He became the wonder of his kindred and familiars for his awful life, and serious and frequent retirements, avoiding all company that might interrupt his meditations; and by giving himself over to a life of mourning and pilgrimage, he was as unpleasant to them as the world was to him." From this last phrase we may well infer that already his inflexible conscience had occasion for courage. Thus early, the battle of his uncompromising rectitude with the world's laxity began; and a long battle it was to be, and a hard one. What sustained him in it we may partly see from another expression used afterwards by his affectionate and revering son-in-law, — "His sorrow did not flow from a sense of former vice; for he was virtuous from childhood."

In such times as his, a man of Penington's spirit found enough to do. The whole head of Christendom was sick, and its whole heart faint. England reeled to and fro like a drunken man; indeed, to no inconsiderable extent its ruling men were drunken men. The church had a Popish form without a catholic spirit; splendid endowments and gorgeous paraphernalia, with a rotten heart; an Evangelical Liturgy little less than inspired, with a profane administration and a dissolute clergy. What zeal remained spent itself in persecution; what little morality survived, laughed out of countenance in public, skulked from ridicule into compromise. Beyond the limits of the Establishment, religious prospects were far from being such as a sincere and honest believer would desire. The Dissenter's devotion too often showed itself in a dismal and unmanly deprecation of the divine wrath, and his learning too often ran into abstract and subtle speculations or else the bitter strifes of dogmatism. It was a dreary day for devout, truthful, genial, and aspiring disciples of Jesus. Such Isaac Penington was. And it was a painful and unwelcome work that he had to do, among "a people that had never known Jacob's troubles, nor the fear and trembling with which the true salvation is wrought." He must take

in his hand the hammer that broke the rock in pieces ; and yet he must not quench the smoking flax. He must be a stanch, fearless and rough-handed Reformer, with the fan in his hand, thoroughly purging the floor, laying the axe at the root of the tree ; and yet, while radical as the Baptist, he must be a follower of a meek and lowly Christ. Such, again, Isaac Penington was.

Can we not, amidst many differences in other respects, discover some resemblance between his age and our own ? If he were to appear in many of our New England churches to-day, would he not still have mournful reason to confess "that the spirit and abilities of men took up so great a part and share in religious duties among them, and the spirit of the Lord so little, that he felt them of little or no use to him" ; and that "though they held the notions of the Truth, it was not in the precious and experimental sense of the holy virtue and life of the Truth ?"

Into this state of things in England Penington was led by the hand of Providence. He did not shut his eyes upon it and fall asleep ; nor did he turn his back upon it and run. He confronted it boldly. Not in his own strength, but "waiting for the Lord's coming in spirit," he vigorously proclaimed a new order, preached the inward kingdom of faith, love and peace, prophesied of a better future founded on reality and sincerity. He told the English people, "There is a way of peace for persons and nations to know and walk in, — the way of the light and guidance of God's spirit ; and for a man or nation to do that which is right in their own eyes is the way of trouble." He had no hesitation in writing a letter of plain admonition to the Royal Society, "*so termed*" his Quaker horror of worldly titles carefully added ; and he wrote in this style, "Friends : I have heard that ye are seeking after the excellency of nature and learning. I am not for discouraging any man, in endeavoring after that which is useful in its kind and place ; but it is the advantage of everything to know and abide in its place. God is not an enemy to nature, but to the corruption and disorder of nature. Have ye known that shaken down in you which must be shaken down and removed as a cottage, before the everlasting kingdom can be established in you ?" He goes on, after the

same fashion, schooling the Royal Society through seven distinct treatises, "written," he says with a certain proud humility, "by one whom it hath pleased the Lord, of his great goodness and tender mercy, to lead out of the darkness unto his marvellous light; known among men by the name of Isaac Penington." It brings some additional weight to his expostulations to remember that he was amply qualified by his own genius and attainments, to be a fellow with the men he addressed.

However correctly it may be said of many of the early Quakers that they had nothing to lose in entering the Society of Friends, because they generally came from the less favored classes, this is not true of Penington. And for this reason he deserves especial honor. One of the most respected Quaker authorities testifies of him, that, not only did the embracing of the new doctrine bring debasement upon his learning and wisdom, and bitter contradiction to his former companions, but "his worldly station was the most considerable of any that had closed with this way."

The early Quakers, like their successors, were not without their disturbers, their jealousies, and their factions. The careful student of their internal history will discover, what the laws of the human constitution might have led him to expect, that such intensity of zeal, coupled with that imperious self-reliance that cast every existing institution into contempt, was not to be long in creating domestic dissensions. No mortal discrimination could always separate in personal consciousness between the direct, peculiar guidance of the individual by the spirit of the Most High, and the honest but obstinate motions of self-will. Thus came collisions. It is greatly to the credit of Penington that he was always active in allaying these discords. His own sweet-tempered charity soothed the envious suspicions of his brethren. Doubtless, many a spark of hatred that might have risen into a flame of open strife, owed its quenching to his vigilant affections. In the household of this branch of Dissenting Faith, he was emphatically a peacemaker.

Penington was one of the earliest disciples of the Quaker doctrine in England, and of course his courage is to be esteemed the more highly for the independence implied in a

solitary profession. "He was brought to the true fold in an early hour of the Gospel day," says Ambrose Rigg, with a pardonable presumption in his language; and "his trials were great, both inward and outward, in which he acquitted himself as a valiant champion in the Lord's war." There is abundant testimony, however, that his boldness was tempered with gentleness; that he was "of a retired spirit, loved justice and delighted in mercy, very tender in spirit, and of a broken heart, the sense of the power of our endless life being often upon him." His bodily frame was too feeble for the hardships of such journeys, pilgrimages, and physical exposures in the ministry, as some of his more robust brethren encountered. But his frailty hardly appears, from the records of his life, to have restricted his exertions. It certainly did not quench his zeal, nor abate anything from his moral fortitude. Samuel Jennings, in his "Testimony concerning that faithful servant of the Lord, and our dear friend Isaac Penington, whom God hath lately removed from us and fixed in his Eternal Rest," adverts to his power as a public speaker, and apostrophizes him with enthusiasm: "Oh how often hast thou been opened, and thy spirit sweetened, and in that sweetness drawn forth to minister to those that were Israelites indeed, when thy words were softer than oil, sweeter than honey, and more refreshing than the purest wine; but to the wicked and deceitful as penetrating arrows. And although it were so contrary to his nature to touch with strife, yet God that guides the meek in judgment, did sometimes concern him in a dreadful, yet true testimony against all that would divide in Jacob, and scatter in Israel."

In common with the great host of confessors who dared in those troubled and bloody times, to raise a remonstrance either against the empty ritual of a hierarchy, or the stern dictation of the Presbytery, the ecclesiastical tyranny of the throne, or the theological tyranny of the commonwealth, — the prerogatives of Charles, or Cromwell's self-will, — Penington went more than once to prison. And to those who know what an English jail was in those days, before Carlyle's "philanthropic, flabby, eider-down monsters," Howard and others, had got into them, this means something. Robert Jones was there, on several occasions, with him, and reports

his behaviour. "Being now willing by the power of God to suffer with great fortitude, cheerfulness, contentedness and true nobility of spirit, he was a good example to me and others. I do not remember that ever I saw him speak harshly of those that persecuted him; for he was of that temper as to love enemies, and to do good to those that hated him. O, the remembrance of the glory that did often overshadow us in the place of confinement. So that the prison was made by the Lord unto us as a pleasant palace!"

It helps to show the temper of that remorseless age, to notice the occasions of his incarceration. In the year '61 he was cast into Aylesbury jail, and there kept seventeen weeks, in a cold room, without a chimney, for the crime of "worshipping God in his own house." In '64 he was sent back to the same unwholesome place, for the same period, for "peaceably waiting upon the Lord in a meeting." About a year after, as he was following the body of a deceased friend to the grave through the streets of Amersham, with several others, he was caught up and lodged in prison a month for this heinous offence. Again enjoying a few weeks of liberty, he was rudely arrested by a soldier, who put him in durance, to be held there, "during the pleasure of the Earl of Bridgewater," in company with the plague and other inconveniences. This "pleasure of the Earl" lasted the greater part of a year. Soon after Penington's enlargement, he was seized one night in his bed, at the instance of the same amiable Earl, and hurried off to Aylesbury jail again, and there he lay without cause or even a formal accusation, for a year and a half, in rooms so cold and damp as to give him a dangerous malady, and nearly to cost him his life. At last he was brought, under a writ of habeas corpus, before the King's Bench Bar, and there ("with the wonder of the Court that a man should be so long imprisoned for nothing,") acquitted. Subsequently he went to visit some friends confined in jail at Reading, and while there was laid hold of by one William Armorer, a Justice of the Peace, and locked up for almost two years. Such things were done in England less than two centuries ago.

If any persons doubt whether writers of the Quaker School understand that power of language, and those subtle and

cunning uses of speech, that come of literary culture and care, let them read Isaac Penington's works. They lie before us, collected in two thick quarto volumes. Portions of them are quite unreadable. Other portions are strong with the strength of a master's hand, instinct with genius, richly adorned with the delicate touches of a refined sensibility, and are overflowing with the fervent piety and devout affections of a believing Christian's soul. There *are* pages that amply justify the suggestion of George Whitehead, half-serious and half-sly; — "If anything in the books of our deceased brother (especially of what was early written, as in a time of infancy,) seems doubtful, or not so clear to thy understanding, let it bear such charitable construction as becomes a Christian spirit; censure it not, but wait till the Lord come, who reveals secrets and unfolds mysteries." And others are unprofitable. But there are others still, quite worthy to be ranked among the abler productions of those stirring and stimulating days. It is to be regretted, unquestionably, that Penington allowed himself to prefix to his treatises certain titles, something worse than quaint, conveying conceits that try the reader in more ways than one, and sometimes with sensations altogether intolerable. He was left to affix to some of his essays the following names: "A warning of Tender Bowels to the Rulers, Teachers and People;" "Some Considerations helping out of the outskirts of Babylon, that her inward building may be the better come at, and be more open to the axe and hammer which are to batter it down and cut it up for the fire." "The Sounding of Bowels towards thee, O England;" "Things of great weight for the Healing of the Ruins and Breaches, which the Envy of Mankind hath made in men's souls:" "Of Professions that are but as so many deceitful plasters which may skin over the wound, but cannot truly heal it." It is only to be said in his apology, that in these and other singular exhibitions of taste, he has the countenance of the men, small and great, of his age.

We must content ourselves with a single specimen of his writings.

"This I say to such who are ready to beat their brains and dispute, — Leave contending about names; come to the thing, come to that which reproves thee in secret, follow the light that thus checks and draws; be diligent, be faithful,

be obedient; thou shalt find this lead thee to that, which all thy knowledge out of this (even all that which thou callest spiritual light,) will never be able to lead thee to. And when thou art joined to this light, it will shew thee him whom thou hast pierced, (even so as never yet thou sawest him,) and open a fresh vein of blood and grief in thee, to bleed and mourn over him; and work that repentance in thee, which thou never wast acquainted with before; and teach thee that faith, to which yet thou art a stranger; and teach thee that self-denial, which will reach to the very root of that nature which yet lives; even under that, and by means of that, which thou callest spiritual light; and will lay such a yoke on thy neck, as the unrighteous one is not able to break; yea, such an one as the hypocrite (which is able to hide it under confessions of sin, and forms of real knowledge, devotion, and worship,) shall be daily tormented and wasted with. And then thou shall know what it is to wait upon God in the way of his judgments, and find the powers of life and death striving for thy soul, and daily floods and storms encompassing and attending thee, under which thou wilt assuredly fall and perish, unless the everlasting arm of God's power be stretched out for thee, and be continually redeeming thee. And then thou wilt feel and see how sin is pardoned, and how it is bound; how death broke in upon Adam, and how it daily breaks in upon mankind; and what that standard is, which the Spirit of the Lord lifteth up against the powers of darkness. And then thou wilt clearly come to perceive, how that which thou hast called religion formerly, (which flowed not from this principle,) hath been but the invention of thine own imaginary mind, (though thou fatheredst it upon the Scriptures, as most men do most of their inventions about doctrine and worship,) wherein thou hast been in a dream of being changed, and yet remainest still the same in nature; and hast had a name that thou hast lived, but art still dead; a name of being sanctified, but still unclean; a name of being justified, but still condemned by the light in thine own conscience; which is one with him who is thy judge, and who will judge according to it: and so, as that which is real taketh place in thee, that which hath been but imaginary will pass away.

"Oh! come to the morning light of the everlasting day! Come to the Son's light, to the Son's Spirit! Wait for the dawning of the day of righteousness, love and peace, and for the arising of the day-star. *Come die to your own wisdom*, (it was the word livingly spoken to me and entered my soul when it was spoken; never departing from me, though I was long in learning it,) and know what it is to suffer with Christ, that ye may also reign with him."

It was Isaac's rare fortune to draw to himself the agreeing respect and love of men engaged in the same offices with himself, and that to an enthusiastic degree. "Ah, dear Isaac Penington was a man near and dear unto my love," writes Christopher Taylor, "as he was unto many others, because of his inward tender-spiritedness. An entire innocent man he was, without guile in his heart; a true Nathaniel indeed; a lovely instrument in God's hand." That he was no inconsiderate, credulous fanatic, adopting his peculiar sentiments without deliberation, we may infer from the words of Alexander Parker, "The first time that I saw his face was at Reading, in Berkshire, twelfth month, 1656. And though at that time he had not the outward garb and appearance of a Quaker, yet did mine eye behold an inward beauty and hidden virtue of life in him. He did not hastily join in society with us, but for some time did reason about many things. The instruments that declared the Truth, and their way and manner, seemed very contemptible to him, until he heard that faithful servant of God G. F., at a meeting at J. Crook's, in Bedfordshire, at the time called Whitsuntide." His own account of his conversion confirms this statement. He remarks in one of his treatises: "After all my distresses, communings and sore travails, I met with some meetings of this people called Quakers, which I cast a slight eye upon and disdained. Yea, the more I conversed with them, the more I seemed in my understanding and reason to get over them, and to trample them under my feet, as a poor, weak, silly, contemptible generation, who had some smatterings of truth in them, and some honest desires towards God, but very far off from the clear and full understanding of his way and will. After a long time * * * I felt the presence and power of the Most High among them; I felt the dead quickened, the dead raised; insomuch that my heart said, 'This is he, this is he, there is no other! This is he who was always near me and had often begotten life in my heart; but I knew him not distinctly, nor how to dwell with him.' And then was I given up to the Lord to become his."

The witty man became a man of prayer. The courteous and affable gentleman took on the character and garb of a plain preacher at the Friends' meetings. The polished schol-

ar grew up into the loftier stature of a devout, self-sacrificing and meek disciple of Jesus Christ. Wise without pride, he was also cheerful without levity, and serious without asceticism. The higher traits of the form of religion that he espoused seemed to have place in him, without distorting his genial nature into its more awkward and angular peculiarities.

If it be true, that the best test of a man's dispositions is in his home, we may be assured that the heart of Penington was kind and pure. Not only did those who observed his domestic relations from a distance, bear witness to his fidelity in them; but those always better informed and better qualified critics, the inmates of his own household, pay their cordial, sorrowful and agreeing tributes to his simplicity, his forbearance and his equanimity. His son John wrote of "his dear, deceased father," that "he was a very loving man, courteous to all, ready to serve his very enemies and persecutors. And whenever he entered into a friendship with any, he was constant. And my cry is, that I may walk worthy of so dear a parent, so unwearied and earnest a traveller for mine and others' eternal well-being, and so faithful and eminent a laborer in God's vineyard." Thomas Ellwood, no mean judge, declares of him, that "In his family he was a true pattern of goodness and purity, not only by his grave example, but by his savoury instructions and exhortations to goodness. To his wife he was a most affectionate husband; to his children a loving and tender father; to his servants, a mild and gentle master; to his friends, a firm and fast friend; to the poor, compassionate and open-hearted; and to all, courteous and kind." But the most touching and most convincing of all his eulogies, is to be found in the lamentation of Mary his wife. Her "testimony concerning her dear husband," is one of the most affecting pieces of elegiac composition we have ever read. The sweet submission breathing through her sad remembrances, — the mingling together of the mourner's sigh and the triumphal note of Christian faith and joy, — the profound feeling announcing itself through an artless sincerity of expression — entitle this simple panegyric to a far higher place in literature than many a funeral oration of more ambitious pretensions.

"Whilst I keep silent touching thee, O thou blessed of the Lord and his people," she writes, "my heart burneth within me. I must make mention of thee, for thou wast a most pleasant flower of renown, planted by the right hand of the Lord. O the many years thou putttest thy mouth in the dust, and wentest softly and bowed down, and hadst anguish of soul! No likeness, or appearance, or taking sound of words, or visions, or revelations, wouldest thou take up with, instead of Him that was Life indeed. O who can tell the one half of the bitterness of thy soul! In this state I married thee, and my love was drawn to thee; because I found thou sawest the deceit of all nations, and didst refuse to be comforted by anything that had the appearance of religion till He came to his Temple, who is Truth. In this my heart cleft to thee, and a desire was in me to be serviceable to thee in this desolate condition; for thou wast alone and miserable in this world, and I gave up much to be a companion to thee in this thy suffering."

The concluding passage must be given almost entire:

"This little testimony to thy hidden life, my dear and precious one, in a day and time when none of the Lord's people knew thy face, nor were acquainted with thy deep wounds and distresses, have I stammered out that it might not be forgotten that thy fresh springs were in God, and light was on thy Goshen when darkness covered the people. But now that the day is broken forth, and thou wert so eminently gathered into it, and a faithful publisher of it, I leave this bright state of thine to be described by the 'Sons of the morning,' who have been witnesses of the rising of that 'bright star of righteousness in thee,' and its guiding thee to the Saviour, even Jesus, 'the Truth and the Life.'

"Ah me! he is gone! he that none exceeded in kindness, in tenderness, in love inexpressible to the relation as a wife. Next to the love of God in Christ Jesus to my soul, was his love precious and delightful to me. My bosom-one! that was as my guide and counsellor! my pleasant companion! as near to the sense of my pain, sorrow, grief and trouble as it was possible. Yet this great help and benefit is gone; and I a poor worm, 'a very little one to him,' compassed about with many infirmities, though mercy let him go without one unadvised word of discontent, or inordinate grief. Nay, further; such was the great kindness the Lord shewed to me in that hour, that my spirit ascended with him in that very moment that his spirit left his body; and I saw him safe in his own mansion and rejoiced with him. And from this Light my

spirit returned again to perform my duty to his outward tabernacle, to the answer of a good conscience.

"This testimony to dear Isaac Penington is from the greatest loser of all that had a share in his life.

MARY PENINGTON."

And what a glimpse into the bereaved woman's solitude and sorrow is given us, in the little marginal note that she left in the corner of her manuscript: "This was written at my house at Woodside, the 27th of the 2d month, 1680, between 12 and 1 at night, whilst I was watching with my sick child."

With Penington, as it ought to be with every faithful disciple, growth in age was growth in grace. The multiplying of his years was the multiplying of inward treasures, and of hopes laid up with Him whose years have no end. "In his declining time, when the candle of his natural life burnt dimmer, his soul waxed stronger, and like a replenished lamp, shined with greater lustre." "He fell very sick, in the sixty-third year of his age," says Penn, "under a sharp and painful distemper; but that bitter exercise could give no shock to the internal peace so well established before it came."

Thomas Evernden, who unfortunately celebrated his friend's virtues in bad poetry, tells us, in better prose, that it was his happy lot to be with him the two last meetings that he was at, — the first of which was in the city of Canterbury; and exclaims, "O the mighty power of the Lord God that descended upon us; and O the pleasant chrystal streams that did abundantly flow into our hearts!" It was soon after this, that, being on a return from a journey, homeward, he was overtaken, in Kent, with a severe malady. And there he died.

With all Friends, and not a few beyond the limits of that still too sectarian body, the praise of George Fox is quite enough to satisfy a reasonable ambition, and his *imprimatur* sufficient endorsement for any book. Soon after Penington died, Fox wrote of him with characteristic confidence, "I do know that he is well in the Lord, and in peace with him through the Lord Jesus Christ. Such as are puffed up, and do swell in their notions may be glad that he is taken out of their way; and they may think that they will have the more liberty; because that he, being a living stone, hath no fellowship with

such as were full of high sounding words, without the life of the heavenly and spiritual man ; but did reprove such and admonish them. Let all such take heed, and be warned. I could desire that all were in that innocent life that he departed in. And I know that he died in the Lord, and is blessed."

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD,

PROVED BY THE ORDER AND THE BEAUTIES OF NATURE.

[TRANSLATED FROM FRAYSSINOUS.]

How sublime, how beautiful is the view presented by nature. And which of us can remain indifferent to the collection of her wonders which constantly strikes our eyes? Even among atheists is there one, who is not sometimes deeply moved, and who, at those times when his passions are stilled, or when reason seems to shine with purer light, is not terrified at his own theories, and by a feeling stronger than all his sophistries, is not, in spite of himself as it were, recalled to the Sovereign Being, whom it is as impossible for us to banish from our thoughts as from the universe? Confining ourselves here to those things which, to be perceived, require neither science, nor painful efforts, and which, unfortunately, strike our minds the less forcibly, as they are the more familiar to us, what a chain of wonderful phenomena, so adapted to elevate our souls to God, is presented to us, by the planetary system to which we belong — those brilliant globes, which, for so many centuries have rolled majestically through space, never wandering from their orbits, never checked in their revolutions; the sun suspended in the heavens, like a lamp of fire, which vivifies all nature, and holds the position best fitted to enlighten and warm the earth, without singeing it by the heat of his rays; the moon which presides over the night, with her gentle light, her various phases, her changing

yet regular course, which the genius of man has made subservient to his advantage; this fruitful earth, on which is perpetuated by constant laws, a multitude of living beings, with that admirable proportion of the two sexes, of deaths and births, by which it is neither left desolate nor yet overrun by inhabitants; the immense seas with their periodical and so mysterious agitations; the elements blending together, modifying each other, combining so as to satisfy the wants and sustain the life of that prodigious multitude of beings so various in size and structure; and lastly, the regular succession of the seasons, which constantly clothes the earth in new forms; which after the repose of winter, presents her successively embellished with all the flowers of spring, enriched by the harvests of summer, crowned with the fruits of autumn, and thus causes the year to roll round in a circle of various scenes without confusion as without monotony; do not all these form a union, a collection of parts, from which not one can be withdrawn without breaking the universal harmony? And from them how is it possible not to rise in spirit to the Author and Preserver of this admirable unity, to that immortal Spirit which, embracing all in its vast omniscience, makes everything conduce to his ends, with equal strength and wisdom?

W.

THE ANONYMOUS WORK OF ART.

[TRANSLATED.]

ONE day Rubens, while strolling in the environs of Madrid, entered a convent whose discipline was more than usually austere, and noticed, not without surprise, in the poor and humble chapel, a picture which denoted the most lofty talent. The painting represented the death of a monk. Rubens called his pupils, showed them the picture, and all shared his admiration.

"Who can be the author of this work?" inquired Van Dyck, the favorite pupil of Rubens.

"A name was written at the foot of the picture, but has been carefully erased," replied Van Thulden.

Rubens sent for the prior, and asked him the name of the artist who had compelled his admiration.

"The painter is no longer of this world."

"Dead!" cried Rubens, "dead! and no one has ever known him, no one has repeated his name which should be immortalized, his name before which perhaps mine would sink into insignificance! And yet," added the painter with a noble pride, "yet, father, I am Peter Paul Rubens."

At this name the pale countenance of the prior became suddenly flushed. His eyes sparkled, and he fixed on Rubens looks which expressed more than mere curiosity; but this excitement lasted but for a moment. The monk cast down his eyes, crossed on his breast the hands which he had raised to heaven in a moment of enthusiasm, and repeated,

"The artist is no longer of this world."

"His name, father, his name! that I may tell it to the world, that I may give him the glory due to him!" and Rubens, Van Dyck, Jordains, Van Thulden, all his pupils, surrounded the prior and begged him instantly to give them the name of the author of this picture.

The monk trembled; a cold perspiration ran from his forehead over his emaciated cheeks, and his lips contracted with a convulsive movement, as ready to reveal the mystery whose key he possessed.

"His name, his name," repeated Rubens.

The monk made a solemn gesture.

"Listen to me," he said, "you have misunderstood me; I told you that the author of this picture was no longer of this world; but I did not tell you that he was dead."

"He lives! he lives! Oh, let us know him!"

"He has renounced the things of earth; he is in a cloister; he is a monk."

"A monk, father! a monk! Oh, tell me in what convent; for he must leave it. A man, marked by God with the seal of genius has no right to bury himself in solitude. God has given him a divine mission; he must accomplish it. Tell me in what cloister he conceals himself, and I will draw him from it, and show him the glory which awaits him. If he refuse

me, I will procure an order from our Holy Father the pope, to force him to return to the world, and to resume his pencil. The pope loves me, father ! and will listen to me."

"I will tell you neither his name, nor the cloister in which he has taken refuge," replied the monk, in a firm tone.

"The pope will command you," cried Rubens, exasperated.

"Listen to me," said the monk, "listen to me, in the name of heaven ! Do you believe that this man, before he quitted the world, before he renounced fortune and fame, did not strongly wrestle with such a resolution ? Do you believe that he did not experience bitter deceptions, cruel sorrows, before he could at length feel," continued he, striking his breast, "that all below is but vanity ? Leave him then to die in the asylum which he has found, from the world and its anxieties. Besides, your efforts will avail nothing ; he would remain victorious over such a temptation," added he, making the sign of the cross ; "for God will not withdraw his aid ; God, who, in his mercy has deigned to call him to himself, will not drive him from his presence."

"But, father, it is immortality that he renounces."

"Immortality is nothing in the presence of eternity."

And the monk drew his cowl over his face, and changed the conversation, so as to prevent Rubens from insisting farther.

The celebrated artist left the cloister with his brilliant escort of pupils, and all returned to Madrid, in silent revery.

The prior, entering his cell, threw himself on his knees, on the straw which he used for a bed, and poured forth a fervent prayer to God. Then he collected his brushes, colors, and easel, and threw them into the river which flowed beneath his window. He looked sadly for a few moments at the water which bore these objects away for him.

When they had disappeared, he resumed his prayer on the straw before his crucifix.

QUIET WORK.

A SERMON, BY REV. WILLIAM MOUNTFORD.

1 THESSALONIANS iv. 11. Study to be quiet and to do your own business.

WHAT the text means, we shall understand the better, if we fancy ourselves with the holy brethren at Thessalonica, to all whom this epistle was to be read, by the express charge of St. Paul. It is evening; and in the upper room of a house are met the members of the Church. They are only very recent believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. They have been a church but a very few months. Greeks most of them are, but some few are Jews; and sitting together by themselves, there are some of the chief women of the ancient city. They are all very zealous, and are much pleased at having just learned that Paul knows of what a resolute profession they make. Themselves they had to send away Paul by night; and from Berea, which he went to, they soon heard of his having been driven out. But also they have heard of his having been at Athens and of his having spoken on the hill of Mars. And now there is a letter from him to them as a church of believers. And very anxious they all are to hear what is in it. For they are Paul's converts; and they are a few believers in the midst of an unbelieving city. One of them was on the sea-shore to-day, and saw a ship with the images of Castor and Pollux on the prow, for trust in, against a storm. And as he went by it, we may fancy how he said to himself out of the Psalms, "Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols." This disciple, as he came along, came past a shop, the master of which he would not salute, though he knew him well; because in the law it is written — "Cursed be the man, that maketh any graven or molten image, an abomination unto the Lord, the work of the hands of the craftsman." This other disciple has been visited

by two Pharisees to-day, and been talked with a long time, and been threatened with being put out of the synagogue ; and himself he is both angry and distressed, and he has been thinking that everywhere the rulers and the Pharisees are one with them at Jerusalem, who killed the Lord Jesus. Another believer is a Greek, and all day in the shade, he has been disputing with an Epicurean ; and very acutely, as he himself thinks ; and now he is hoping to learn some fresh argument for faith from this epistle of Paul's. This other believer has done no work all day, and not much for some months, because he thinks there is no need for his straining himself, now that the end of the world is so very nigh. And here is another, who has been unable to attend to any business all day, for wondering what new window into the future Paul's letter will open for him, and whether there will be any sign to be perceived of the coming of the Son of Man. This morning, the priest of Cybele was out with an image and a drum, begging his monthly alms, and with a crowd behind him singing the songs of the mother of the gods. And here is a disciple who met them, and who was insulted and indeed assaulted for indignantly refusing the priest a coin. And ever since he has been murmuring to himself out of Jeremiah, "Shall a man make gods unto himself ; and they are no gods ? O Lord, my strength and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction !" And Jason is here ; and with the coming of this letter from his late guest, he is reminded, how on Paul's account, he and other brethren were drawn before the rulers and charged with receiving men that were turning the world upside down.

And now to this church in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ, this letter of Paul's is read. And in it, they find themselves praised for their zeal, but also advised to work and be quiet. Night and day, they have been thinking of a higher order of things being to begin soon ; and yet this business, so soon to be ended, they are specially told, they ought to be doing. They are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ ; and yet here is work mentioned to them ; and they are to work with their hands, and commanded so, and as though religiously. They have learned what holiness is, and now they

are to learn how holy life may become, even at its commonest. They have been shown great truths, — religious truths, that shine in the firmament like great lights ; and very wonderful they have seen them to be ; and now in the light, they are to work. Light from heaven, they have ; but they have it, not to wonder at merely, nor to see by only, but to work by and to live in. They are to study to be quiet, and to do their business, and to work with their hands. And the way they were commanded, we may consider ourselves advised.

Every man has business, much or little, of some kind or other ; — a something which it behoves him to do. And if it were possible for a person to have no business at all, and he did really wish to be the better for living ; then it would be quite necessary for him to make business for himself. Man is hand as well as head ; and he is created to do as well as to think. A man acts the better for thinking, as is very plain ; but what is not so evident, though quite as certain, is that a man thinks the better, for acting. For growth in grace, a man must have some business to mind. And indeed it is what no man is born or lives quite unprovided with. There is no man, however recipient he may be of wealth and honor, but is a creature of a thousand debts ; and some of which he cannot help but feel. Now to acknowledge these and to attempt discharging them, is business for this man. A man may be superannuated from work, or he may fancy himself too rich for the need of it ; yet there are matters belonging even to him, which are for his minding, and which may be done in such a way, as he may be spiritually the better for. Orderly habits of living, tender respect for the time and convenience of persons better employed than himself, and punctual repayment of courtesies — even these simple things are of much avail for keeping an idle man out of that desultory state, which is morally and mentally so ruinous.

Idle as we most of us should be, if we might, it is well that we can not be. There is Necessity over us, as a taskmaster ; and he rings the bell for our uprising, and fixes for us our hours of work, and our times of rest ; and almost he chooses for us our places of residence, and the persons we are to live with ; and minute by minute, he is beside us,

to keep us from flagging at our business ; and often he makes us answer with a prompt Yes, when we would rather answer with an indolent No. And with the unwilling he is stern, and empties his house and strips him of respect, and makes him know, that if a man will not work, neither shall he eat. Hard things are thought of this Necessity ; and yet he is an angel set over us by God : and he is known to be so ; and is revered so, as soon as ever ourselves we begin feeling like children of God.

For necessity is one thing to one man, and another to another. To one man it is a chain about him, and a whip held over him ; while to another it is a feeling like that of God whispering to him, out of infinity "My son, thou must !" And this voice, whoever seems to hear, answers to it at once "I will ;" and oh, so readily. And to this man Necessity is like the wish of God, and is what he is solemnly, and almost tenderly, glad to know of, so as to be able to comply with.

A man has been used to hear a voice saying to him "Thou must do this ; and thou shalt not do that," every hour, every day, for years ; but when he becomes a child of God, these terrible commands change into divine and persuasive tones "This way, my son ! this is the way, I will be loved at this time !"

And this sublime experience is a man's from what there is of constraint upon him, from the business he has to do.

Service is good for us, again, as being an apprenticeship to Duty, which fits us for becoming workers together with God. The right temper of a maid servant toward her mistress, and of a workman toward his employer, is what the service of God is the easier for. A man is surrounded by circumstances, which he has to serve : which are his masters, and keep him at work, when he could wish to be resting ; and which are chains on him, that keep him from rising in the world. But now this environment is what a religious man will be the devouter for ; and to him his pathway in the world will grow the sublimer, for the lot which is laid upon him ; like mount Calvary, when Christ was carrying his cross up it. A tradesman has to serve the demands of his business ; and the attention, which it exacts from him, and the compliance it

requires from him, are a discipline of his will, for which he is the freer in his moral choice ; can master his passions the more easily, if he wishes, and can serve God with the better constancy. On any matter, a man cannot say "I ought and therefore I will," in common life, but in his higher life, there is an effect produced, though seldom known to him. If a man is religious, every wise and energetic act in his business tells also in his spiritual estate. Just as we cannot talk to another man, but what we meant for only his ear goes up into the sky, without our thinking. The responsibilities of business are experiences from which a man may believe more readily and practically in accountability to God. And in the business of life, of whatever kind it may be, often there happen things to a man, if he will mind them, which hint to him of the way in which idle words of years ago will be heard again in the day of judgment.

It is in the quiet, thoughtful doing of business, that it betters us. Studiously quiet we are to be. It occurs to me just here as being very remarkable in that epistle to the Thessalonians, that there is no exhortation from Paul to confessorship or willingness for martyrdom. Instead of saying "Be brave ; be martyrs ; think what I have endured ;" he says "Be quiet ; all of you ; mind your business ; keep at your work." But Paul knew well, what he was commanding his converts.

As most persons think, great deeds are like measures, that show how high up the standard of Christian perfection the performer can reach. Those men are thought to be excellent, who will risk their lives for other persons, or who will make public benefactions of thousands of dollars. Now these things are very well. But as actions, they are more or less noble, according to whom they are done by. A man gives away a thousand dollars. As an action, it is well any way ; for it may be done more ways than one. A man may give his money away, in order to be generous, and as though to buy virtue with : but it is far more admirable when he gives the money, because already he is generous ; when he gives it as easily as he smiles, and as naturally as he eats.

There is a sense, indeed, in which nobody ever does great actions ; for if they are great to the doer himself, then it is to

the littleness of his spirit they are great, and so they are not nobly done. And if to him they are not great deeds, and do not feel, as though they had been exertions ; then the man is himself greater than his actions ; and they are no more than what might have been expected from him.

It is the spirit a man is of that is his value. And it is the way he does his business, the daily temper he is of, that is his spirit.

It was much to be one Christian among a thousand idolaters, and to be a convert of Paul's, at the daily risk of life : it was a good confession of Christ which was witnessed in a hostile world, and before rulers, and very likely with the wild beasts waiting. And yet there were some persons who were easily competent to this, who yet could not be quiet and do their own business, and work with their hands. With them, it would seem to have been much easier to die for religion than to live religiously.

There is veneration for ever for the martyrs of the Church ; although many, and perhaps most of them, died more nobly than they lived. And always there is fresh praise for some famous actions ; though really many a one of them was but a splendid exception to the course of a vulgar life. But of such deeds there cannot rightly be much thought. An action may be very, very remarkable ; but it is not very noble, if it is merely the spasm of a man's virtue. Really what is honorable in a man is the moral strength he walks about in, the goodness he smiles with, and the clear eye he has for duties in his house, and his dwelling-place. Oh, but harder than a martyrdom, grander than fame : and itself the excellence of our nature, is when a man's worldly life becomes heavenly by the spirit he lives in : when his little actions show greatly in the eye of God : when what has been hateful to him, he loves, if under Providence it is what he has been set to : when he is divinely patient in annoyances, troubles and hardships, as feeling that they are an element for him to live in, and of God's maintaining about him ; and when the prison-walls of circumstance become transparent, and what let him have sight of God about him, and of glory waiting him no long way off.

It is our own business, we have to do ; and we ought not to

be coveting another man's opportunities. Something especial, remarkable, some great thing, we should wish to do. But then it is not what God wants from us, if there is no opportunity for it allowed us. That our souls be great is what God wants; for when they are so, then easily and always our actions will be. They will be great even when they are trifles. For in their littleness, they will be like diamonds. Let me be nobly minded; and my two mites, if they are all I have to cast into the treasury of God, will show there, and will very likely spend further thence, than some famous achievements of princes.

For deeds to be great, they must be what the doer himself thinks nothing of — what he does in the same way as his daily business. There have been men, who have undertaken great deeds for God, with much the same feeling as a Bacchant frenzied with cymbals and songs and a shouting crowd. Let us cease from this feverish longing for grand chances of virtue, and recover a healthier feeling. Large gifts of money; bravery for the truth, against the public; days and months and years of life spent for the good of men; grand instances of right; — let us understand that it is the spirit of these actions, which is good, and not the mere usefulness of them; else there is not a cloud in the sky, nor a wind at sea, but is morally better than any man living. Let us believe that we can be quiet; and yet by doing our own business in the right way, be martyrs and philanthropists, and patriots, and even like kings and priests unto God and the Father.

A man is really noble, only when his house is pervaded with the same spirit, as his two or three famous actions. It is the moral strength of a man, when he is quiet, that is his worth. The beauty of his holiness is in his common talk, in his temper when he gets up in the morning, in his reverence for a beggar, as being in the image of God, in his patience with trifles, and in the spirit which he does his daily business in.

“Study to be quiet and to do your own business.” Till we can exert ourselves and be quiet, we cannot be nobly minded. It is while we are walking in the way of duty that angel thoughts meet us. Seldom or never do great thoughts come to a fretful or desultory man. There must be order and



quiet in the temple of a man's soul before the windows of it will open for light from heaven to come in.

But we think "Oh if we had but been living in any place else, or in any other age than the present, and then we could have done as Paul advises." We think, we could have possessed our souls in peace, in the past, the venerable past. But the past was no more venerable to live in, than our present is. But our differences fret us; our circumstances chafe us; our enemies make us haters. Poverty now is an odious dread. In the world as it is now, we can not live as we could have lived in Thessalonica: so we think. "Oh the old city, by the Mediterranean sea, against the walls of which no tide rose or fell! I could have been so calm in it. And from every man and circumstance in it, there would have been moral growth for me. Unanxious and sympathetic I should have been. And I should have talked and worked, and sat and walked in the sunshine of life, and quietly have felt myself ripening in it. Heathenism itself was not so utterly unblest, but with my living alongside of it, I should have been the better for it. And I could have lived among Epicureans, and Stoics, and worshippers of Diana, and been so easily charitable as to have borne all things, and hoped all things, and endured all things amongst them. I could have been quiet, and in the mere minding of my business have been well contented and almost divinely blessed in that old Greek city, on the Thermaic gulf." But now our present way of life; will it not be old sometime, and seem poetic? It will. And on this age men will look back enviously, and they will think, how self-possessed they could have been in our circumstances; and how gentle and genial and cheerful they could have been, where we are provoked and annoyed and disquieted. Certainly they will think so. Though, ourselves we fancy, the world is grown vulgar and cannot now be lived in nobly. Oh, yes, if it had been at Thessalonica, our lives had been to be passed; then we could have lived quietly and done our own business so well and so calmly, and almost religiously, and as though for the Lord, and not merely for men to judge upon and pay for. And we could have refrained from taking foolish thought for to-mor-

row, if to-day had been a day in the 208th Olympiad. And however poor we had been, we could yet have lived bravely, with an old chlamys to wear instead of a ragged coat. If a Pharisee had troubled us, we could have borne well with him, and Greek enemies we could have been magnanimous with. And no doubt, this very same way, did the Thessalonians think of the times and men, that were before their own mean and intolerable age. For very certainly our difficulty was theirs: fleshy as we are to be also spiritual; creatures of yesterday only, and yet to be calm, as though with the spirit of immortality, to be in the world and yet to be believers in heaven the while: to have only mortal things about us, and yet from the very feel of their perishing nature, to know of our own everlastingness; to have unworthy persons to do with, and by treating them better than we think they deserve, ourselves to grow much better than we were: to assure ourselves of our being heirs of God, by the strange, sweet experience that comes of living earthly lives in a heavenly spirit.

Anyway this present is our age, our opportunity in the world; and there will no other be allowed us. Our circumstances are very untoward, as we think; then it is for us to think also, that they yield us the nobler chance. Our annoyances are so very tantalizing; our hardships are so very distressing! well then our calmness with them may be so very heavenly. Let us cease looking away from our own localities and fancying more favorable scenes of life; and let us understand, that what is wanted from us, is not the quiet of ease, but the quiet that is studied, that comes of prayer, and of doing our business with God looking on. Persecuted, unfortunate, hard-worked; let us none of us be distracted, but believe that perhaps we are divinely privileged; and let us try to know of ourselves, how —

There are in this loud stunnig tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of the everlasting chime:
Who carry music in their heart,
Through dusky cane and wrangling mart,
Plying their daily task with busier feet
Because their secret soules a holy strain repeat.

Quiet, in this divine way, we will study to be, and our own business we will do. None of the duties nighest us can be left undone, except at our peril. It is only with the ready performance of them, that our virtue is healthy.

A man thinks to be virtuous in some one field, which he will be active in. Now it is very possible, this man may be the worse for his attempt. He is a zealot for Temperance or Liberty, or for his sect. Now the man perils his virtue by being more zealous for public objects, than for his private duties. Often a man may be seen very eager for some public movement. He will have all his friends and neighbors join him in it. It seems to him, that every virtue runs in the direction of it; and that there is no goodness possible in those persons, who are not enthusiastic for it, like himself. If his object gets accomplished, then he feels as though all virtue were used up. But if it fails; if his neighbors can not be wrought up to his purpose; if his idol object cannot get crowned with success; then secretly he begins to doubt it; and what is far worse and very common, the man begins to feel as though virtue were not so very virtuous, as though zeal were giddiness of the head, and religion a foolish feeling. Himself he has been self-deceived in religion; and so he fancies religion to be self-deception. He has been foolish in his philanthropy; and so he thinks philanthropy itself is foolish. He never loved goodness itself, but only some good things; and them he loved, not for being right, but for being very useful, or for being famous. And so when neither use nor fame result from them, then he thinks them worthless.

The more zealous a man is, the more studious and quiet he ought to be. The further a man can see, the more need there is for his minding things nighest him. The more public spirited a man is, the more studious he ought to be of his own business. A man is little the better for organizing a community, if he is without any taste for ordering his own household. And morally a man is not much the better for being a public benefactor, without he is kindly to the persons nighest him. The charity, which does not begin at home, is wanting in kindness, or easily may be. A man may be very active and even useful in managing public business; but

if he cannot mind his own business and be quiet, then himself, he is the worse for what he does publicly.

Always there are some persons, and in inquisitive times like the present, there are very many, who can think of improvement only theologically and ecclesiastically; who must always be advancing with the age; and to whom it is —

“As though religion were intended
For nothing else but to be mended.”

They are always asking their friends “What is to be done next?” While really, they are the very persons, whom St. Paul will have study to be quiet and to do their own business.

And not very unlike these, there are other persons, who are very zealous for religion; only they are not zealously religious. And they feel, as though religion were failing, and were not so very religious, if their sect declines in numbers, or if the Hindoos, after having been baptized, apostatize to the worship of Achari. But if they could only learn to be quiet, and to do their own business; they would feel it enough, all too blessedly enough, that they are not alone, and never can be, because the Father is with them.

What God has set us to, our own business is what we must mind. But then it is so very common, that we cannot believe that there will anything great result from our doing it. But now the commonness of the business is from its being common to us all; which is what God himself is. A great soul may grow in a man from exercise at any work, any trials whatever, if only they be what God has put him to.

See how a flower grows! A rose! Out of very common elements, comes its beauty; out of earth, and air and water. And so will the human soul grow into glory and honor and immortality by minding very common duties, in a very simple spirit, so it be godly.

A father, a son, a husband, a neighbor, a worshipper, a citizen, a man with business to mind — in these relations of God’s making for us, let us be sure, there is more good to be got, than in any remote stations that we covet, or opportunities we could wish for.

But oh ! we do so wish to do something great ! And do it, we would, if only we had an opportunity. But then to be great, is something grander still, and is always in our own power. But we should so like to see results of our achieving. A very natural wish, and yet what may very easily be an irreligious one. Workers together with God, we could wish to be, and we hope we are. Let us remember then, that we are sowing for him to reap, with whom a thousand years are as one day. Let it be enough, that it is God's world we are working in ; a world which angels desire to look into ; and in which every earnest thought of ours, and many an idle word even, turns to something that is everlasting.

The true temper for serving God in is to serve him for the religiousness of the service, and not for the renown of it, nor for the mere usefulness of it. But indeed, the truly great man never thinks of being great. He is exalted by being humble. He is great by being godly. And often with such a man, his life is eloquent by being quiet ; and widely useful through his way of doing simply his own business.

A man lives a good life, and himself he is only intent on being an honest laborer ; while really he may be a prophet amongst men, by God's use of him. A tradesman makes his yea be yea, and his nay be a religious no ; and so from behind his counter, he is a priest unto God, helping persons to be holy, without their knowledge. There are some men so beautifully and entirely good, that it is as though virtue itself spoke in their words, and acted in their actions, and through their lives won beholders to herself. When some good men smile on us, it is as though the heavens were benign ; and when they frown upon wickedness, it is as though God's anger against it were the more awfully believable. In this manner often a good man is an unconscious revelation of God. Heavenly truths speak in his words. His movements are holiness made visible. In his decisions justice feels juster than ever it felt to us before. In his ways and words, the laws of God publish themselves anew.

This is true greatness ; the greatness of character, and not of mere action, or station. And it is that true greatness, which no man can grow up to except quietly, and by making

religion of his daily business, — by his doing it heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men.

So let us study to be quiet, and to do our own business, and to do it, because it is our own, and without coveting more importance for it. Let us be good for the sake of being good, and not for the sake of being examples, or being widely useful. Let us live divinely — live the way, God works.

God colors many a violet in dells and secret places, where it blossoms unseen; and he plants many a flower in Alpine crevices, into which no one ever looks; and he bends the rainbow between the bright sun and the black clouds, on the sea, and out in waste places, where there is not a beholder to wonder at its beauty: and all over the desert, while the moon moves on, he keeps every grain of sand glistening in the long still night.

And now we will be holy for the sake of being holy, and kind for the sake of being kind.

Oh, this life of ours! how great, and rich, and wonderful it is! God is in it all, if only we will feel him. Our homes! they are porches of heaven, if only we will kneel in them and pray with our souls as well as our lips. Our business! it may be an "exercise unto godliness," unto what is everlasting, what is of the spirit, spiritual, if only we will do it in the right spirit. This life, this little life! we may grow heavenly great out of it.

And thoughts like these we will study, and so become quiet. And ours will then be that quietness of temper, which easily turns into peace of soul. And peace of soul is what the world neither gives nor takes away, and is what death itself cannot disturb.

MY NATIVE VILLAGE.

"WHENEVER the word "meeting-house" strikes my eye, recollections are suggested long since stored away in the chambers of memory of an old structure, without a spire, unpainted, save as the rains and mildews of half a century have blackened its exterior, within whose enclosure were square pews finished around the sides not unlike modern sheep-racks, through whose interstices I used to play with a truant boy when his mother was looking at the minister. The old Parson too in his "pen," I can clearly behold much better than I can remember what flowed from his *goosequill*, which told us I am since informed of a way of salvation according to the Hopkinsian creed ; a plan, which I have no desire to embrace even to this day. Nor do I believe the majority of his hearers gave heed to his doctrine who were better able to understand it than myself : at any rate, if so, it had a strange *practical* bearing upon their lives. I review the "intermission" service of an hour's length in winter very vividly ; for we always spent it at the old yellow Tavern, directly opposite, where the landlady provided a fire in cold weather as we sat and heard the news ; meanwhile we ate from the contents of our pocket the usual fare for Sabbath noon of dough nuts and cheese. I remember the hostess used to tell us a great deal about the "minister's living ;" she thought him extravagant, and his wife an "idle woman because she hired Nelly the negro woman to do her washing." Her resentment too was enkindled towards one of the deacons, because, she affirmed, "No man who drank flip ought to do so right after partaking of the communion." In my childish simplicity I used to wonder how she dared to talk so boldly about such *good men* whom I was early taught to reverence : and when we returned home and I began to repeat what I had heard, a hand used to be put over my treacherous lips, and I heard a voice, "Tut, tut, child, you don't know what you are talking about." But the vulgar phrase applied to children, that "little pitchers have great ears," was verified in my case, for I heard my grandmother say, "Mrs. So-and-so had taken a little too much to-day." I understood then just as well as now ;

but I dared not make any comments; although I greatly wondered and have to this day that women ever will do so. But I am getting too loquacious.

Things are strangely altered since I was a child. The old meeting-house has been torn down, and a little white church with green blinds, having a fenced common around it, bordered with trees, has taken its place. Where the old "yellow Tavern" stood, an Episcopal structure occupies the ground; and a little behind this is another small Baptist church; while right across the way is the most attractive one of all, which the old inhabitants call the "Heretics' quarters;" but which truly belongs to a worthy few who are Unitarian in belief. I begged to know of one of the oldest fathers in the town why he branded it with such an epithet as "heretic." "Oh," said he, "they don't believe in anything essential to salvation."

"But did you ever examine their creed?"

"No," said he, "but Mr. Goodnow our minister says there is nothing *evangelical* in it, and so I shun the whole race of them."

"Because *Mr. Goodnow says so*. Allow me to tell you, sir, I think you take too much on trust. Come now, you used to be a candid man; I have the Unitarian creed, and we will read it together; for you must know I have embraced this doctrine since I left my native town."

"*You have?*" vociferated the old man — and he literally drew back as if he feared contamination in the disclosure. "*You a heretic!*" he repeated, "after all your pious mother's prayers that you might embrace a saving scheme of salvation. I am sorry, sorry, to think that you have grieved away the Holy Spirit, and done despite to the spirit of God's grace," — and his voice quaked as he spoke of my lost condition.

"But, sir," I continued, "you sometimes find in daily life that you come to wrong conclusions. You change your opinion upon subjects that you once firmly maintained. You know how you have altered with respect to your views of war: once you advocated it; now you abhor it."

"Yes, but the spirit of Christianity forced us to do *that*."

"And perhaps the spirit of Christianity will change your sentiments towards my creed."

I then read it sentence by sentence, to which my friend nodded assent. He thought it over; there were some omissions, but as far as it went it would do; but then the vicarious efficacy of the atoning sacrifice was not inserted, nor the words *endless punishment*, both of which Mr. Goodnow thought essential to salvation; but he could not explain *how* exactly; he was not learned in theological books like his minister; and so he could not state nor answer the question; I reminded him that books on Theology were written by fallible men; the Bible was *the* book whence to learn the essentials of salvation; and after an hour's conversation, I found I *had* somewhat softened his tone of denunciation, but he could not but add as we separated, "Remember your dear pious parents were evangelical Christians." I could not but reflect as I left the old man how much "set terms" were employed to convey ideas which really did not mean all they imported; and I never have been able to learn why they should be appropriated exclusively to one set of believers. They are good words, properly applied, and have just as much meaning for *us* as for other Christians. Why should we not call our belief "evangelical"? our creed "orthodox," as well as they? Or have we so long conceded to them their peculiar phraseology, that it now conveys only *their* impressions of divine truth? Truly, we ought not to abandon to them the good words "Regeneration," "Saving Faith," "the efficacy of the Holy Spirit," and other expressions which have a lively signification to believers in our creed.

But we will turn from our digression to the village of meeting-houses and shoemakers, and see the effect which so many creeds have produced upon the inhabitants. Are they more spiritual than formerly? Have they more of the feeling of love to God or love to man? Do they strive more for the things which make for peace, "whereby they may edify one another"? Let us look at the *practical* bearings of such diversity of faith.

Returning to our native land after an absence of twenty years, it is not surprising that we should desire to gather in the few that remain, whom death or change of some sort has not affected; and I accordingly proposed to my worthy aunt that we should have a gathering of this sort. "I do not believe,"

said she, "we have harmony enough amongst us to get up such a party." And I began to enumerate those whom I should desire to meet. "There are the Lee families — *they* will surely come." "You are much mistaken, Charles," she replied; "I have never spoken to Eunice since she joined the Orthodox. Mr. Lee was very bitter in his remarks upon our denomination, and when I asked for a dismissal from the Calvinistic church to ours, he rose in meeting and said, although he knew nothing against me in a *moral point* of view, yet he deemed my request as infidel in a *religious view* and as such he should never give his vote for my eternal perdition! I called upon him the next day for an explanation, when he replied, "the doctrines of grace were not to be trifled with, and as Christ and Belial are at enmity, thenceforth he desired no intercourse with my family;" a request to which I have since adhered.

"Well, then, let us send for the Johnsons — they are good sensible people." "But very rigid Baptists," said my aunt; "on your account I will give them a trial of their kind feeling, but I am greatly mistaken if they do not decline. I met Mrs. Johnson the other day, and proposed to her an object of very common interest affecting the common schools; if *sewing* could not be introduced. She remarked she had girls who ought to be instructed in needlework, but in *their society* there was a very good woman who taught it, and if *she* could be employed *she* would subscribe! But I will send an invitation to them as you desire it." "And to the Fletchers," I added. "Well, they are Episcopalians, Charles. Mrs. Fletcher told me some time since, she had so much interest in the members of her *particular church*, she could not extend her calls beyond it. But *they* shall be sent for." In this catalogue I included about fifteen whom I desired to meet for "auld acquaintance" sake. But they were of every denomination, and many had not spoken together for years, who were as one household in infancy and childhood. But I was resolute to know nothing of these estrangements, and so I addressed many of my old friends with an invitation whom my aunt cared not to invite.

When Mrs. Lee received her note, Sally Jenkins who carried it over, said, she overheard her remark to her husband, "that

Charles Taylor had come back, her dear departed neighbor's son, — a godly woman whose prayers for his safe return she had no doubt were answered ; " — (referring to my return from one of the West India islands where I had spent many years.) *I should like to see him, I do declare, and if he were any where else but at his aunt's, I would go.*" After some further discussion the old lady wiped her mouth and put off her spectacles, and came out from her consultation saying, "You may tell Mr. Taylor, *Mrs. Lee* will accept his invitation ; but *Mr. Lee* is engaged at a meeting of directors for Foreign Missions." It was singular enough to notice the phraseology of unaccepted notes. All were frank enough and truthful enough not to insert the word "regret." One could not attend, being engaged in a "church meeting" — another on a "committee" — women at "maternal prayer meetings," and a variety of exercises to save themselves from having intercourse with that heretical sect called Unitarians! But honor to old *Mrs. Lee* ! She *would* come and see the son of her dear departed neighbor ! And she brought her knitting, and came early before my aunt had lighted her fire in the best parlour or had changed her habiliments.

She wanted to talk ; she had heard of my departure from the true faith, and she wanted to reason with me, more by appealing to the spirit of my departed mother, than by any cogent and convincing arguments. One conversation was however of a deeply spiritual character, and she confessed if I were a Unitarian, she did not see why my belief would not entitle me to being an heir of grace, provided my works corresponded with my faith. We were interrupted however by the appearance of some who considered Baptism a saving ordinance, and so the subject took a more general turn.

I could not but observe how well my aunt appeared. Her remarks were always to the point and so well expressed that I saw they left an impression. Just before tea, she desired me to read a hymn, and she would propose singing it, as many present were rather distinguished leaders in the choir — for we now numbered thirteen guests ! I chose that beautiful one commencing with, —

"Great God ! 'tis thine alone to know
The springs whence wrong opinions flow ;
To judge from principles within,
When frailty errs, and when we sin."

My old friend Mrs. Lee sang in a loud shrill voice, so distinctly and fervently as left an impression of her hearty assent to the words she uttered. A more social feeling now pervaded every soul; we seemed to be in harmony with each other, and I had the satisfaction of seeing that those who I was told had not spoken to each other since "they got religion," were now in a free and easy conversation. Had but the ministers of all the parishes attended, I have no doubt the effect would have been greatly heightened. Some were frank enough to say, "If we only had you, brother Taylor, with us all the time, I do believe the state of feeling among us would be improved." We all separated after singing "Dismission Hymn," each to his own home, while I was destined to return to mine many hundred miles away; but my aunt has since assured me the effect of only that one social gathering has manifested itself in countless other pleasant ways.

Again I ask, why is this barrier to common intercourse in many villages on account of diversity of opinion? Surely the spirit of Christ cannot dwell in such divided hearts. As we are all frail and erring, why should we pretend to control our neighbors' belief in religious matters any more than household ones; only as we show him in the spirit of love a more excellent way? I am forced to the conclusion that these results proceed only from ignorance of each other's real sentiments. Many a time have I quoted remarks from the beloved Channing, which have touched a chord in my brother's soul, when he would have turned away from the book which contained such thoughts. We shall never effect great results, till we bring about the spirit of brotherhood. I have known two clergymen of entirely opposite views who so harmonized with each other upon every work but "changing works" that both parishes held each other in the most profound esteem. There was no denunciation *there* — while across the river were two other societies, who had no sort of intercourse with each other. One, it is needless to say, was far happier than the other; — for we were created for mutual sympathies, and "were it not," remarks a recent traveller, "were it not that the elements of religion find their native element in the soil of every human soul, we should long since have quarrelled it out of the world"!

H. S. E.

LETTER FROM WASHINGTON-

WASHINGTON, MAY, 1850.

THE great battle that has been going on here this winter — signalized now by the death of the most eminent champion, who received it was said, his death-blow from the schism that took place in the party of which he was leader — has made it almost impossible to attend properly to anything else. One seems to lose his bearings; and both politically and morally the stars in our firmament are in such a whirl, that everything looks unsteady. And all our movements here depend so much on the powers that be, that it seems as if we had no story to tell except what the newspapers are telling, in more or less perverted guise, in every corner of the land.

And yet it has been a long winter here in more ways than one. Very many of the steps of progress our city makes depend directly on the government, and are a little halting at this moment, till we know whether any more "appropriation bills" are to be suffered by southern tactics. Among these are the completion of the Patent Office (or Home Department as it will then be,) on the grand scale it is begun on: and a magnificent plan of enlarging the Capitol, by adding two marble wings of a hundred and fifty feet by ninety each and carrying out the colonnade in front, so as to make the building five hundred and forty feet in length, and in proportions far more beautiful than now. But there are other things in which the city is now large enough to go alone; and these are increasing rapidly in interest and importance year by year.

The Smithsonian Institution is diligently and usefully performing its function. Its beautiful lecture-room has been crowded two or three times a week, principally to hear scientific lectures from Professor Agassiz, Johnson, Alexander, Reed and others. It has now in course of publication a very valuable collection of papers, by Professors Pierce, Walker, Agassiz &c., besides the offer of far more of valuable material than it can attend to. An eminent scientific man in France has offered to make it the medium of publishing his researches. Experiments and observations are consequently going on under its auspices, though on a limited scale, as the revenue is mainly consumed in the building. A library of some five thous-

and volumes, besides the most valuable collection of engravings (the librarian tells me) in the country, is already in the beautiful reading-room of the western wing. After two years there will be an annual library fund of some ten thousand dollars, which with copy-right books and exchange will enable this to overtake the Astor Library in five or ten years more, and soon to be much the largest in the country. A catastrophe in the main building, by which some of the wooden frame-work gave way, has given occasion for rebuilding a part in a more substantial, fire-proof manner, so that the chief objection to the structure will be done away. One of these days we must have the library-wing, to hold two millions of volumes, according to a beautiful octagonal or octopteral plan suggested by Professor Jewett. Meanwhile he is laboriously preparing his great collated catalogue of all the public libraries of the country. When it is prepared, by having each *title* on a separate stereotype plate, made to fit the same blocks, this central establishment might with a little expense furnish *annual editions* of every library that enters into the arrangement. This single list shows the magnificent nationality of such an institution as this at the seat of government. The public schools have undergone a thorough renovation within these two years. From four they have increased in number to about twenty, well systematized; and the special school tax under our new charter is giving them something of the general interest and respectability they have in New England. The teachers have united with those of private schools, in a Teachers' Institute, with weekly conferences in the Smithsonian buildings, and have had several public lectures—one admirable address to teachers from Mr. Mann. Professor Henry is president of the Association, and the Regents have granted the rooms of that building to their use, deciding that this is one very genuine way to promote "the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men."

An effort has been made to organize the charities of the various churches, so as to give help more effectually to the honest and industrious poor by means of an employment store. It has found the usual difficulties and jealousies of the outset in such a plan, but it almost supports itself already, requiring only a little more decided co-operation; and it has operated sensibly from the first, to diminish the applications

for charity. It is a healthy symptom, that the poor who have been used to receiving aid prefer to earn it, and will apply for work rather than for alms. This is at least the case with enough of them to show that the experiment is useful. I wish some one would make use of the pages of your Magazine, and give us the experience of older cities. It seems to be a very difficult and unanswered question, whether as a matter of charity, such an institution can or ought in its scale of wages, to outbid the ordinary employers of the poor. Political Economy demonstrates that it cannot or ought not. But some things encourage one to think otherwise. At any rate what is the legitimate place filled by such an establishment, when it is, as it should be, a self-supporting one?

The Roman Catholic controversy has been going on here very busily of late. I have no authentic accounts of miracles except one I just found in a Catholic story-book, said to have been wrought in Alexandria; and but of few conversions. But a most commendable energy is certainly displayed by those who have the interests of that church in charge. During Lent, President Ryder of Georgetown College gave lectures thrice a week — lectures of some little effrontery and a good deal of popular power — which were thronged from first to last. Then my worthy Presbyterian neighbor fell in with a series of discourses on Presbyterianism the Conservatism of the Union, predicting that the great bugbear of dissolution would be next evoked on the Romanist question, and the seat of power of that church would be removed from Rome to St. Louis. A course in another church traced the stages of its history down to the end of the tenth century. And now, by invitation of some of the associated clergymen, a gentleman from Baltimore, a fair match for President Ryder, is lecturing with great energy to crowded congregations in the First Presbyterian meeting-house. It has been a very busy winter for religious as for political controversy. And one thing I noticed here six years ago, and frequently since, which I have not observed so much elsewhere — that it is very common on both sides, for persons to say they would be either Catholic or Unitarian — submit to church authority *in toto*, or commit themselves to private reason. The Catholics are especially apt to say this and they profess a respect for us which they will extend to no other Protestant church. So

that the effect of exciting the religious body may be like that of exciting the magnet — to augment the force of the two extremities.

At any rate, both the Roman Catholic church and ours flourish under this dispensation. The "St. Joseph's School for young ladies" has removed into a very fine new dwelling house of a thousand dollars rent. The college for boys numbers some three hundred pupils. And among the plans suggested for the future glory of the church, is, on the death of the aged priest who rules its large estate close by us, of nearly an entire square, to erect thereon a grand cathedral-church, and remove the seat of the archbishop of the United States, to this city from Baltimore.

I was applied to the other day, by a very respectable looking man, for aid to rebuild one of the colored churches. It is a matter of choice with the colored people to be by themselves, and manage their own affairs. They have several churches, and about a thousand Sunday scholars. They pay no school tax, and have no right in the public schools, but maintain their own private schooling. Some features of the local law, (which I have spoken of before) are unjust and hard upon them; but their choice seems to be not to come into collision with the higher powers, to be submissive and orderly citizens, and go on with their own quiet efforts at self-improvement. I am told their improvement is very decided within these ten years past. They certainly deserve all encouragement. The relics of slavery are dropping slowly away from the District; and if these people who strongly prefer the south, will persevere under all their discouragement, they will set a most hopeful example of what emancipation may issue in, in these neighboring states. And if no *involuntary* exile to Liberia is compelled by the law Virginia has just passed,* an era of enterprise and self-improvement may be just opening to the African race of America. I cannot help trusting, that such efforts as these, steadily made among themselves, will do something to abate that jealous and sullen prejudice among the ignorant and vulgar of the whites, which is at present the gloomiest feature perhaps, in the whole discussion.

J. H. A.

* Appropriating \$30,000 a year, for five years, to the transportation to Liberia of persons now free, (allowing \$15 and \$25 a head,) and adding thereto a tax of a dollar annually, on each free colored man.

INTELLIGENCE.

ORDINATION AT MANSFIELD, MASS.—Mr. Daniel W. Stevens, late of the Cambridge Divinity School, was ordained over the Unitarian Society in Mansfield, on Wednesday, May 22, 1850. Introductory Prayer, by Rev. Dr. Putnam of Roxbury; Reading of the Scriptures, by Rev. Mr. Bridge of East Lexington; Sermon, by Rev. Dr. Putnam; Ordaining Prayer, by Rev. Dr. Francis of Cambridge; Charge, by Rev. Mr. Robinson of Medfield; Right Hand of Fellowship, by Rev. Mr. Bridge; Address to the Society, by Rev. Mr. Kinsley of Mendon; Concluding Prayer, by Rev. Mr. Merrick of Walpole.

ITEMS.—Rev. A. P. Peabody of Portsmouth, N. H., is to deliver the annual Address at the approaching Anniversary of the Meadville Theological School. —The Dudleian Lecture was delivered in the University Chapel at Cambridge, May 5, by Rev. E. B. Hall, D. D., of Providence, R. I., — on the validity of Ordination as practised by Congregationalists in New England. —Rev. Samuel Johnson has been engaged to preach at Harrison Square, Dorchester, for six months. —There are good prospects for the Society at Greenfield. —Rev. William Mountford of King's Norton, England, has been invited to settle at Gloucester. —Rev. A. A. Livermore takes charge of the Society at Cincinnati. —The "Christian Inquirer" has been restored to the files of the Mercantile Library Reading Room in Montreal, — by a large vote. —A very interesting anniversary of the "Children's Mission" in Boston, under the care of Rev. Mr. Barry and originally suggested by Mr. George Merrill, was held on May Day. —The Fairs held at Roxbury and Dorchester on that day, for the Roxbury Ministry at Large and the American Unitarian Association, were quite successful. —A marble bust of Dr. Pierce, of beautiful execution, and a capital likeness, wrought by Mr. Thomas Carew of Boston, is to be presented to Harvard College by some of the friends of the venerable minister of Brookline, — a very appropriate commemoration of one of the worthiest sons of that institution.

Hon. Daniel Webster has published a letter in reply to a congratulatory letter on his late speech, from citizens of Newburyport, in which he denies that there is any authority for Government higher than the Constitution, and refuses to recognize any connection between the Slavery question and the subject of religion and morals.

ANNIVERSARIES IN BOSTON IN MAY, 1850.

BOOK AND PAMPHLET SOCIETY.—The Annual Discourse was preached on Sunday evening, May 26, by Rev. George E. Ellis of Charlestown, from the text, "His letters are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible." The preacher showed that a commanding influence is often wrought upon the world by the writings of men who, from some infelicity of temper, manners, or personal presence, are unfitted to impress assemblies by the living voice. Moses, Paul, Milton, Johnson, Coleridge, and many other names, distinguished in religion and letters, were cited as examples. The great power of the printed page, or Christian literature, as an auxiliary to the pulpit was well illustrated, and the subject brought into immediate relations with the objects of this Society.—Neither the congregation nor the contribution was large in proportion to the merits of the discourse.

The following are the officers of the Society for the next year:—Francis Brown, President; Francis Alger, Vice President; Theodore H. Bell, Treasurer; Samuel G. Simpkins, Secretary; James Tolman, Charles Faulkner, and D. R. Chapman, Committee.

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, PIETY AND CHARITY.—The meeting was held May 27. The officers elected for the ensuing year are as follows: Rev. Dr. Parkman, President; Rev. Dr. Barrett, Vice President; Rev. Dr. Young, Secretary; Rev. James W. Thompson, D. D., Rev. W. Newell, Rev. G. E. Ellis, Rev. F. D. Huntington, and Rev. F. A. Whitney; Trustees.

MASSACHUSETTS BIBLE SOCIETY.—The meeting was held at the Winter Street Church, Monday afternoon, May 27. A report was presented, and the following persons were elected to office:—Hon. Simon Greenleaf, President; Rev. Francis Parkman, D. D., Vice President; Rev. N. L. Frothingham, D. D., Corresponding Secretary; Rev. George Richards, Recording Secretary; George R. Sampson, Esq., Treasurer; Samuel May, Esq., Auditor; with 18 Trustees.

At the public exercises, prayer was offered and the Scriptures read, by Rev. Dr. Sharp; able addresses, setting forth the influence, value, historical power, and divine authority of the Bible, were made by W. J. Hubbard, Esq., Rev. Alonzo Hill, and Hon. Edward Everett.

COLLATION.—This favorite festival, provided by Boston laymen, never was prepared on a scale of greater magnificence, or more cordial good cheer than the present year. As usual, the tables were spread in "Assembly Hall," and probably not less than a thousand persons of both sexes, sat down to the

abundant and beautifully decorated feast. Hon. James Savage presided, with dignity and urbanity, and his opening speech was a cordial and complimentary welcome to the clergy and their wives.

The chaplains of the occasion were Rev. Dr. Gannett and Rev. Mr. Osgood. To an appropriate sentiment, the latter gentleman responded by allusions to the scenes and especially to the portraits of wise and sainted men upon the walls. When the institutions of the Bay State were alluded to by the chairman, a suitable reply was made by Lieutenant Governor Reed. Hon. Daniel P. King, Representative in Congress, spoke for that body with much spirit and humor. Father Taylor was called up in the character of a "Bostonian." He began by asking the chairman how long a man must live in Boston to be a Bostonian. The chairman felicitously replied that it depended altogether on the man's merits. Father Taylor disclaimed citizenship on that ground, but proceeded to make one of his entertaining and inimitable addresses. A reference to Old England brought up Rev. Henry Giles, who uttered some stirring words on the dignity of following high standards of truth and duty, above all expediency and compromise, and on the crown of this fidelity in a Christian immortality. Rev. R. L. Carpenter, ("a Carpenter, the son of a carpenter," as the chairman observed;) made a fitting speech in answer to this play upon his name. Rev. Mr. Heywood gave earnest, and touching results of his experience in Louisville. Elder Humphrey of Ohio, on being invited, followed in some liberal and generous remarks, and Rev. Mr. Stone, Minister at Large in Providence, entered a plea for charity. Rev. Mr. Mountford, of England, spoke agreeably of his new acquaintance here, said that the last festive occasion of this kind that he attended was in old Boston, John Cotton's Boston, a place worthy to be the namesake of this, and proceeded to draw ingenious and striking suggestions out of this accidental coincidence. The audience were asked if they approved of the doings of the Committee on this occasion, and most emphatically declared that they did; the same Committee were reappointed, and after the singing of one of the hymns that diversified the proceedings, the company separated.

SOCIETY FOR THE RELIEF OF AGED AND DESTITUTE CLERGYMEN. —

The meeting was held Tuesday morning at 8 1-2 o'clock, Dr. Frothingham, one of the Vice Presidents, in the chair. An Act of Incorporation, granted by the last Legislature, was read and accepted. The following Board of officers were elected: Rev. Dr. Nichols, President: Rev. Dr. Parkman, Rev. Dr. Frothingham, Vice Presidents; Rev. Dr. Peabody, Treasurer; Rev. C. Brooks, Secretary; Rev. Dr. Walker, Rev. Dr. Lamson, Rev. Dr. Barrett, Rev. Dr. Putnam, Directors.

The lowest age at which an individual can become a beneficiary of the Society was fixed at fifty-five years. A constitution and by-laws were adopted. A vote of thanks to those who have so promptly and generously contributed to the permanent fund, was passed. The Treasurer presented a very favorable Report.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.—The business meeting was held at the Chapel of the Church of the Saviour in Bedford Street, on Tuesday morning, May 28, at 9 o'clock. The President, Rev. Dr. Gannett was in the Chair. Prayer was offered by Rev. Nathaniel Hall. The Annual Report was presented by Rev. F. W. Holland, General Secretary. The Report alludes to the fact that this year completes a quarter of a century in the history of the Association, and traced its progress from the small beginnings under a theological and controversial aspect, twenty-five years ago, to the present time. It pointed out the intimate relation borne by our religious views and organizations to the principal humane and philanthropic movements of the day, particularly the ministry to the poor. It treated the development of Liberal Christianity as seen and felt in the higher form of spiritual life and the more devout tone of ministration constantly witnessed among us. The doings of the last year with regard to Missions, Theological Schools, books and tracts, and business affairs, were presented in full. An impressive appeal was offered for the western churches. With an excursive survey of the general religious state and prospects of the country, the Report was brought to a close. With a slight qualification it was accepted. The Treasurer's Report was read, showing an advance in the amount of receipts, for the last year, of several thousand dollars, and was accepted, J. H. Rogers and George Merrill being appointed auditors. G. F. Thayer, David Reed and Rev. J. F. W. Ware, were made a committee to receive and examine credentials of delegates. Rev. S. Osgood, C. Palfrey, S. G. Bulfinch, J. I. T. Coolidge, and Prince Hawes, Esq., were appointed a committee to nominate officers for the ensuing year. The following officers were chosen; Rev. E. S. Gannett, D D., President; Rev. S. K. Lothrop, and S. Fairbanks Esq., Vice Presidents; Rev. Calvin Lincoln, Secretary; H. P. Fairbanks Esq., Treasurer; Rev. J. W. Thompson, I. Bangs, Esq., Hon. Albert Fearing, Rev. A. Hill and Rev. C. Brooks, Directors. A vote of thanks was passed to Rev. Mr. Holland, for his faithful, disinterested, efficient labors in the office of Secretary.

Public Meeting in the Evening.—This was held at the Federal Street Church, in the presence of a large audience. Dr. Gannett, from the Chair, opened the exercises with a brief address, and prayer was offered by Rev. William Mountford. After singing, extracts from the Report presented in the morning were read by Rev. Mr. Holland,—a report, we feel constrained to say, breathing a most fervent, catholic, comprehensive spirit, and drawn up with unusual ability. In the addresses that followed, the remarks took their tone, to a considerable extent, from the circumstance that the meeting marked the completion of a quarter of a century since the Association was formed. Samuel Greele, Esq. dwelt mainly on thoughts awakened by this fact, or clustering about it. He congratulated the denomination that they are no longer regarded by other sects as *tenants at will*, on Christian ground, but *owners in fee simple*. He also alluded with gratitude to the evident increase of prayerfulness and spirituality so conspicuous among the recent tendencies and promises of our body. He was followed by Rev. Samuel Osgood, whose topic was the general advance of theological opinion and development within the present generation. Picturing the early questionings and speculations of those who are men now when they were children, he went on to show how the Liberal

Theology has gone on solving one after another the problems that have perplexed the mind of the age. Noticing the occasional divergences into Natural Spiritualism and into Romanism and its allies, he showed how we have been growing into a genuine Christology, independent of the theories of Calvinism or rationalism. He believed we are coming to a satisfactory view of the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures. One of the most interesting indications of a purer devotional feeling is in the more filial and spiritual tone of the hymns sung in our churches and learned in our homes. Then we are coming to a truer church-life. Mr. O. avowed himself a Unitarian Churchman. We want church-work to be done. We want good pastors. Channing is more to be revered for his faithful ministry than for his books. The young represent the Catholic and evangelical spirit of the church, and they cry out for a true presentation of the blessed doctrine of God in Christ. Dr. Palfrey was introduced by the President as one who had been formerly one of the brightest ornaments of our ministry, afterwards a teacher of our students in theology, later still, at the head of our periodical literature, and as more recently having carried into political life the manners of a gentleman, the acquisitions of a scholar, and the temper of a Christian. We cannot follow Dr. P. in his very interesting historical reminiscences. They made the events and men of some twoscore years and a score of years ago, delightfully fresh; and they evinced a masterly vigor of speech and discrimination of mind, as well as a genial, kind and affectionate heart. Considering the matter and demands of his speech, we consider it one of the most remarkable specimens of extempore discourse we were ever privileged to hear.—Rev. H. W. Bellows spoke of the Literature of Liberal Christianity, and spoke of it as holding the foremost place in the attention of the thinking and laboring world. The Literature of the whole country, so far as it is practical and potent, is in the hands of Liberal men. Our denominational writings are only one wave of a mighty tide on which God is rolling in Light and Truth upon the people. Pulpit and professions, magazines, reviews, newspapers, all are speaking out the large and generous thought that has taken possession of the age. What matter whether the name Unitarian is inscribed on all these or not? The ministerial profession is to be put, by all this liberal literature, on a more solid bottom. It is to be made to stand, because nothing can ever stand in its place, and because men cannot do without it. Just at present the profession suffers from the cause just pointed out. But sifting times are coming, and Religion is to ascend the throne and take the sceptre over the affairs of men, and its ministers are to be honored because they are its true, faithful and fearless apostles. The higher literature of the times requires higher and nobler work of us.—Rev. R. L. Carpenter of England, bore strong testimony to the firmness and freedom of the early Unitarian Christians, and gave graphic accounts of the progress of dissent. Intermingling many striking comments on the state of things in England, he paid touching tributes to Channing and Priestley.—The last address was by Rev. E. E. Hale, whose subject was our future prospects as a Liberal Body. His words were heartily cheerful and hopeful. He stated forcible reasons for believing that our less stringent denominational organization is no practical obstacle to our growth and progress as compared with other Protestants. Underneath our apparent diversities he could see a

real, vital unity. The accordance between our leading ideas and the best aspirations of Christian hearts in those times is a sufficient encouragement to many minds and a significant presage of ultimate success.

The speaking at this meeting deserves special commendation. We doubt if the deliberative assemblies of the world, civil or ecclesiastical, could present a finer succession of oratorical efforts, whether as regards fluency, grammatical accuracy, connected and progressive thought, or earnest, persuasive eloquence. If the managers of the Association had rendered no other service the last year than to provide this occasion, they would have magnified their office.

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE. — The Conference met at 7 1-2 o'clock, on Wednesday morning, and the early hour was spent in a free conversation on personal religion, on ministerial faithfulness, and in prayer. At 9 o'clock the Conference was organized for business. Rev. F. A. Farley was chosen Moderator, Rev. F. D. Huntington, Scribe, Rev. George E. Ellis, Rev. J. F. Clarke, and Rev. J. W. Thompson, Executive Committee. Rules of order passed for the regulation of the proceedings were read by the Scribe. An Address on Theological Studies and Theological Reform, was then made by Rev. G. W. Burnap, D. D. It was a vigorous vindication of systematic investigations and patient thinking in the realm of religious ideas. The desultory habits of the modern clergy were described and powerfully satirized. Dissatisfaction in the ministry is a very natural and very well-merited effect of loose mental habits in it. Every preacher should make some substantial and solid contribution to theological science according to his own taste and selection. Dr. Burnap sought to expose and explode as a superficial fallacy the impression, that such studies lead to Rationalism and to Transcendentalism, by showing that Rationalism in its only legitimate sense, is the right philosophy of all religious inquiry, while the Transcendentalist's perversion of that word into a synonym for the rejection of a supernatural revelation is a *petitio principii*. Reason is the sentinel that God has placed at the entrance of the human mind to determine what shall be admitted, and what shall not. But beyond the region of absolute certainties is the region of probabilities, in various degrees, and this is the region of faith. A true Rationalism will often require faith; certainly it requires faith in a miraculous revelation. The Deism of Bauer and Strauss, the skepticism of Kant and Hegel, are nothing more than the speculations of the English disbelievers of the last century, filtered through the mud and distorted by the Idealism of German Metaphysics. The basis of Transcendentalism is intuition; intuition, as a means to the knowledge of truth, if it be what is claimed for it, must be absolute, unerring, and universally the same. But the assertions of intuition are not accordant. The theory fails. The absolute Truth, which is a better phrase than the favorite one, "The absolute," is in God alone. But doing Transcendentalism justice, it holds an element of reality. The Soul receiving a revelation is greater than the revelation it receives. All preachers and listeners to preaching, the language of prayer and devout poetry, are

transcendental, in some sense, yet none of their utterances though they transcend the sphere of sense, and literal interpretation, ever rise to the lofty level of the inspired Scriptures. The Bible is transcendental because it refers to reason and the moral sense as collateral with itself in disclosing the divine Will. But the Bible transcends Transcendentalism; Christ declares that he was supernaturally aided of God. He teaches the absolute Religion. No philosophy can construct a bridge to put nature onto the same level with Christ. There has been no logical statement of Transcendentalism in this country. Till this is done there is little to fear. Rhapsodical effusions and rhetorical pleas there have been. But till Transcendentalism tells us *what to reject and what to accept*, its analysis is quite incomplete. Jefferson once proposed to do this if he could find sufficient leisure; he afterwards had an abundance of leisure, but the work was never done. Deism never built a church and never can. It only caters for Romanism. The only way we can do our duty to this broad country and all its promises and hopes and opportunities, is to study theological science, to be scholars, to think and labor reverently for God's living and eternal Truth.

A vote of thanks was passed to Dr. Burnap for this address, and the subject was taken up for discussion, in which Rev. Mr. Gray, Rev. Mr. Frost, Rev. Mr. Morison, Rev. Dr. Gannett, Rev. Mr. Sanger, Rev. Sumner Lincoln, Rev. Samuel Osgood, Rev. J. F. Clarke, Rev. H. W. Bellows, Rev. Mr. Withington, Rev. Mr. Dall, Rev. Mr. Higginson and Rev. Dr. Hall, took part.

Afternoon Session.—Rev. W. H. Channing offered an address on Fraternal Co-operation. His idea was threefold,—oneness of all souls with God by their oneness with each other, and thus the possession of this earth in perfect beauty by a glorified Humanity. These three thoughts are rising up and struggling for realization, however dimly, in all hearts. Consider God as the centre and origin of all life; the natural harmonies and order as the plane of his manifestation; and a new race distributed into circles as his children. Christ is the Perfect Humanity, thus the Mediator, and Christianity is not exceptional, but normal in the life of the world; Christ, born with a perfect organization, was the consummation of all the aspirations of the past. His death was the crisis of Christian history, and having risen to the right hand of the Father he pours evermore the life of Love upon the world, connecting the heavenly life with the life of souls on this planet. He is the germ of the Heaven of Humanity. Watch the development of the Church. The centre of the Church has always been, those souls that have believed they were living a life not their own, but derived from other sources, a life of inspiration. From a simple faith that first bound men together in unity, the Church has gone on dividing till it begins to appear that out of all diversities a nearer and fuller unity shall come than men have dared to dream of. In the Church men ask for the true Bishops, men more instinct than their brethren with the life of God. In the State, they are asking for a true peerage of intellect, genius, goodness. The time has come then for a Christian Socialism.

Here is just the extravagance of this theory,—visionary as the speaker knows it will be judged, that the very life of Christ is the destiny of the race. The one reality, the divine reality in comparison with which all other realities are

as nothing, is this, that we know God only just so far as we see and feel him in the sympathies and concurrent deeds of glorified spirits. The absence of this harmony is the obstruction of God's will. In friendship, honor, art, and all the spiritual interests of life, God observes precisely the same order and law of distribution as in the relation of sexes. Our churches are barren because by jealousies, suspicions and separations, we hinder the circulation of the divine life. The first work of a Christian Church is to form a true Christian household upon a Christian home, i. e., some portion of God's earth occupied by fraternal spirits.

Thanks were voted to Mr. Channing, on motion of Rev. Samuel Osgood.

At an adjourned meeting the following morning the subject of the Address was ably discussed, by Rev. C. Palfrey, Rev. S. G. Bulfinch and others.

AMERICAN PEACE SOCIETY.—The meeting was held at the Park Street Church on Monday, Samuel Greele, Esq. in the Chair. Prayer was offered by Rev. Dr. Tucker. An elaborate and oratorical address, treating the subject of war and peace popularly, inquiring what war is, and what are the teachings of Christianity and the duties of Christian States and individuals, was delivered by Rev. A. L. Stone of the Park Street Church, Boston.

The following gentlemen, among others, have been appointed from New England, to the approaching Peace Congress of the World, to be held at Frankfort-on-the-Maine:—Samuel Greele, A. W. Jackson, John Tappan, Mark Trafton, Rev. M. G. Thomas, and Hon. John Prentiss.

The Report of Rev. Mr. Beckwith, the Secretary, made special and hopeful mention of this Congress, and alluded to the three that have preceded it; one at London in 1843, one at Brussels in 1848, and one at Paris in 1849.

The report also refers to the chief events of the year in Europe, bearing on the cause of peace, and states that a very large number of petitions, from all parts of the country, have been presented to our Congress, requesting its efforts to procure peaceful substitutes for the sword, and that only a single vote was wanting in the House of Representatives to obtain a special committee on the subject. Five agents have been in the Society's service including one at the office and corresponding secretary. Publications have been on a much larger scale than usual.

* * We are obliged to defer notices of other meetings to our next No. for want of room.